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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/13/2018

TAGS: PREL GG RU YI CA

SUBJECT: CANADA ON ABKHAZIA

REF: A. STATE 14840

1B. OTTAWA 219

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Director General for Central, East, and South Europe Robert Hage on February 13 expressed appreciation for ref tel views on possible Russian recognition of Abkhazia. He expressed mild surprise, however, explaining Canada's own reading that Russia was unlikely to move in this direction due to its domestic concern over a precedent for Chechnya. He also expressed doubt that, if Russia was seriously contemplating this dramatic step, warnings from other governments about its likely isolation would have any impact at all. He commented that Russia continues to lobby Canada hard against recognition of Kosovo's independence, and reiterated that a few senior Canadian policy-makers continue to have some concerns that Canada's recognition of Kosovo (which he still expects will happen, but only after those by the U.S. and various EU members -- ref b) could provoke the Russians or others into overt support for Quebec's separatist movement.

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